

Curated & Talent Quest for
Presented by India



Voice of TQI

Volume I



Talent Quest for India (TQI) is on a mission to create socially responsible leaders. Our work revolves around how people feel and think about the society around them and help them unlock their potential to impact their communities. And stories are a powerful way to bring our work alive to people globally. Stories can inspire us, help us feel empathy, and connect us to a bigger purpose. Stories also outlast any individual's lifetime and continue to impact generations.

While our mission keeps us together, the individual stories of volunteering have helped us grow as a family. TQI has thousands of volunteers who have hundreds of stories each. Every story can inspire someone to take responsibility for their society. It is difficult and practically impossible to record and articulate each of those stories in a way that retains the authenticity of the experience of those volunteers.

We knew why our stories needed to be told; however, 'we struggled with the question of how we tell them, in a way that retains the authenticity of any volunteer's experience and while at the same time is inclusive of everybody's experience?'

This question led us to initiate the 'Voice of TQI' blog. As the name suggests, volunteers, who are our voice, share their stories in their voice through these blogs. Through these blogs, we have attempted to retain the authenticity in a personable way that it should almost feel like the volunteers are telling their stories personally to you.

We hope that these stories will have a profound impact on you. If you are looking to volunteer with us, perhaps, you find the stories inspiring; if you are a supporter, then these stories will articulate our impact in a personable way; and if you are new to TQI, then the stories should at least be a fun read. 😊

Madhusudhanan Balasubramanian
Co- Founder, Talent Quest for India

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KOUSALYA SHANMUGAM

Quality Engineering Analyst, Accenture

I joined SRM institute for my under-graduation in the year 2016. It was entirely coincidental to meet some of my seniors who were then volunteers at TQI. I remember the saying, everything happens for a reason, every person you meet comes with something that is going to stay with you forever. There is no better way to define my entry into TQI. If it weren't for those seniors I met that night in my hostel, I wouldn't have got what I wanted. I had the opportunity to meet Ram anna and Mohan anna during the farewell party we had arranged for Mohan anna. It was only my first week at SRM. I had already become a volunteer at TQI. Without a doubt, one of the best things that happened to me.

During my course I was actively involved in numerous projects. From going to government schools, to organizing the annual conclaves, I did it all. By the second year I was ready to take my first step into bigger responsibilities. I became the district representative for Kanyakumari district. My first project was field work for flood relief. The third year was even better. I was given the huge responsibility of Project Manager for the state government's women empowerment program that TQI had taken over. The chance came in as a surprise. I was scared, overwhelmed, but above all that, I was motivated. If someone thought I was good enough to take up such huge responsibility, then it meant I had to prove it. I worked with everything I had. I wanted to. I had a great supporting team which included Supraja and Mailesh. Without them I couldn't have done that. After three years of such great projects, I was happy to take a step towards a different direction in my final year. I turned to the creative side.

I started writing poetry, making art, did plenty of voice-overs for TQI videos. You can call it a self-exploration.

To recall my earlier days with TQI is always a joy. All of my confluence stories has its own soul in it. Why? The happiest moment I had was when I was given the chance to sing for the annual confluence. It was my first confluence. Another proud moment I can't stop sharing is when I received the cash award for being The Most Inspiring Volunteer at my second confluence. Earlier, during the representative selection, I was given a week's time to carry out any social activity and present a report. I, with the help of my friend took interviews of street side vendors, taught them to say the word 'Welcome' when someone says thank you. We bought smiley balls, gifted them to bus drivers, ambulance drivers and cleaners at SRM.

The award was presented by Ram anna and my interviewer Sundaramurthy anna in light of that. Now my third confluence was out of the world! I did the voice-over for the first big TQI video that we made. The video was about the story of TQI, how we started, our journey and where we had reached by then. The video was launched during the confluence and to hear your voice loud, clear, while the huge crowd of people are holding breathes in awe! I don't think there is a word in the dictionary to explain how it really feels.

Life before and after TQI – TQI opened a lots of doors for me. I still think I was destined to meet those two seniors that night at my hostel. What is meant to be, is meant to be. I learned what it is like to find joy in giving. To work not just for yourself, but for the others is what drove me. It gave me a vision. TQI helped me find what I can do and what I can learn to do. It helped me explore myself and my limits.

My vision as of now is to create an impact in the society with my creativity as a tool. I want to inspire and motive our younger volunteers. I want to help them face their fears, help them come out stronger. I want each one of them to prove that life is not just about earning money. There is more in life than that. I want them to open the hidden window that is right in front of them. I want to help them see, take chances, do over, not accept failures. I want everything good that life can offer right there in their hands.



UTHAYA BASKERAN

B.Ed, Mohamed Sathak Dasthagir

Uthaya was in her second year under graduation when she came to know about Talent Quest for India through a friend. It was in early 2017.

“A few of my friends and seniors were part of the selection process. The task was to talk about rainwater harvesting. To my disappointment, my name was not actually on the final list that came out. But silver lining! I was given another chance to perform. They heard me speak for a second time, and bam! I was on the team. The first-ever project I was a part of was Water Conservation. That was 2017’s One Year One Cause. That’s now my journey with TQI started.”

Uthaya Baskaran is a Maths graduate from Syed Ammal Arts and Science college, Ramanathapuram “Prior to the pandemic, I used to visit schools for the Ullas and Kanaa projects. I was an active volunteer for these projects until the pandemic caused a disruption.”

“Phone mentoring during the pandemic was the project that brought me back actively to TQI. I am now part of the organization team for the project, mentoring for school students, in particular for the Hasthinapuram region. Phone mentoring has been a defining moment for me. The response I received, the participation, the commitment from volunteers, it is all so overwhelming. Sometimes, as a coordinator, I go on conference calls when the mentors are on call with the mentees. It makes me personally so happy just to listen to the conversation, the fun, and the laughter during the mentoringmentoring”.

"The support TQI gets from government schools across Tamil Nadu is so amusing. How good should an organization be to get this level of acceptance all over? TQI has done it! And to be a part of the team is like a dream coming true every single day. 2017 Daan Utsav was a milestone in my journey. My team conducted a donation drive around the college and locality. The participation and donations we received exceeded our expectations. And the happiness we saw in the faces of those children is a memory etched in my heart forever. You see, there is nothing more rewarding than seeing kids smile at you. It's so special, so fulfilling. Nothing can beat that joy.

Before TQI, my whole life revolved around my classroom. I would sit in my class, read, study and go home. I was even scared to face a crowd. I know that a lot of volunteers say the same, but it's true. There are a lot of people who have the potential and the will to work for a cause like this. But it's very rare to get a chance. I was lucky enough to grab it. I wish people like the old me get a chance like this. A moment of hesitation would have flipped my life. I wouldn't have been here if that had happened. I am happy I was ready to overcome my fears for once. That does not happen often. After joining TQI I am now known in my college not only as a maths department student but as also a TQIan. There was a lot of self-learning. That is my success. TQI is what gave me an identity on my own.

If I should name someone who has helped me a lot in this journey, it would be Ajit and Parthiban anna. They are the reason we have a team for Ramanathapuram. The team is the reason why I am in TQI. I have a very big extended family now. I am surrounded by people who love me, who love what I do and that is all I need. After my marriage, now my husband is also an active volunteer in TQI.

I want to keep teaching and create an impact among children. I want to support my society as long as I can. This is my motto. If there is even a teeny tiny opportunity for us to help someone, we must take it. No standing back, no watching over, no more being an audience. Love what you are doing. Never be harsh on yourself. Working for a cause should never be forced. If something that we do is not because we love it, I don't think there is any point at all in doing that. This is my message to all my fellow TQIans. I can't end without mentioning our beloved Ram anna. He is a true leader and an inspiration to all of us. Without his unending effort, TQI would not have become what it is nownow".



MOHAMMAD YUSUFF

Pursuing Masters

Year 2017 - Yusuf had just completed his schooling and was ready to take a break from the rat race. That was when he accompanied his sister to a rural school where she was teaching. “I was there once to see what she was doing, but ended up accompanying her every single time after that.”

A year later, he joined college and connected with Ram Anna (Founder, TQI). He suggested that Yusuf start a team of his own in his college. In the beginning, his college wouldn't allow him to go on fieldwork so he had to bunk classes. Year went by until he was given the next project – Kanaa Chhote Scientist. “We were a team of four then. I am now coordinating online DIY Kanaa sessions for Thoothukudi district.”

Yusuf had started his own social service for the virus outbreak before the government project. In February, he had pooled money from college to provide masks and gloves to the daily wage workers and college canteen employees. This came to the notice of the principal and the rest of the staff. From then on, he, along with friends, could supply the same until lockdown.

“Later in April, I was at home when I got this Government Covid Volunteering registration link. I immediately registered for the program and shared the same with Ram Anna and other TQI groups.

A couple of days later I received a call. I was asked to come over to the Taluk office to collect my ID and start the work. They put me up at a nearby PDS shop.

The first day was a little difficult for me. I had to talk to the people, make them maintain social distancing whilst explaining what this was all about. I had to multitask. Officers from the local police station used to drop in every now and then. They enquired about the issues we faced. After a few days, people from the locality also understood the process. They even brought lemonade and snacks for us. I was glad to have such a great support system through out the period – not to mention my family and their care.”

“One day on my way to the venue I lost my ID card. I went all the way back to the taluk office to collect a new one. But to my surprise, on the same day, I got a call from a stranger, said he had got my ID card. I went to meet him and got my old ID back. He was also a volunteer like me. I was happy to meet such a kind and thoughtful person. This was one of the best memories during the project. Every small experience counts, every memory counts and so does every act of kindness even if it doesn't seem to be. I volunteered for a total of a hundred days. Met a lot of new people, saw what is out there in the places we don't notice on a normal day, learned a lot.”

Other than Covid volunteering if I am to list some memories, the best would be the first feedback I got. I was at home reading it aloud and my father got tears in his eyes. I felt pure joy then. Got all the confidence to reinvent myself. That was a moment I would never forget in my life.

I always had the fire inside to help others, to hold the pier of change. I was clueless about how to start with it. But now, I have got TQI to hold my back and support me. The brand speaks for itself and I now have a safe space to open up to new ideas. It's been a blessing altogether. This is what I got to convey to everyone who will read this – TQI has your back. TQI will show you the way if you are brave enough to walk through and through.



ASHOTHARMA

Technical Assistant, TWAD

It was in 2017 when Ashotharma was in college that he came to know about Talent Quest for India through a few of his college mates. The idea of TQI fascinated him so much that, it took him very little time to fill the form and attend the brief interview. It all happened so quick. Ashotharma spent the first two years in TQI accompanying fellow volunteers to schools and orphanages in and around Tirunelveli. It was in the previous year that he took up mentoring.

“I went to a couple of schools during these years as part of the Ullas Summit program. Alphonsa School, Anbu Illam, Periyar Higher Secondary schools, are a few of them. My first ever experience with kids is still fresh in my memory. It was a class of ninth grade. I was scared since it was the first time I ever faced these many school kids at a time. The moment I entered the class, the students started shooting a million questions and all I could do was stand there still. I was petrified, to be honest!” said Ashotharma. He fondly remembers the first time he went to Anbu Illam as part of Ullas. “I was hanging out with the camera when another student asked me to get inside. He took my camera and wouldn’t hear no for an answer. I was reluctant but went inside to see an otherwise very strict senior of mine, dressed as a clown and dancing with the kids. That was the moment I realized, that the fear I had was all inside, and if I just let it all go for once, there won’t be a looking back. So, I stepped up, forgot my fears and inhibitions, and started talking to those kids. I played games with them, spent time with them, taught them, and in return learned from them.

That was the day I gave my signature for the first time. My happiness had no bounds.”

“Being with students younger than me taught me a lot of things that teachers never did. I realized that I had leadership qualities in me. My anger management got way better than before. But, most importantly, I learned how to face a crowd and interact. I understood the tricks of talking – what to talk, where to talk, and how to talk. Along with these big lessons, working with TQI also taught me certain smaller things like grooming! These three years had been an overall learning experience.”

Covid Volunteering

Tamil Nadu government, at the beginning of Covid – 19, had issued circular inviting young volunteers all around the state to help and assist other officers on the ground. Ashotharma applied for the program in the Thoothukudi district and worked with the state government for almost 150 days. He was scheduled at a PDS outlet in the Ettayapuram village, Thoothukudi.

“On the first day, it was all messy and new to me. A police constable came over and helped me manage the crowd and shared with me a few trivia about how to manage these people for the days to come. In the evening, he came over again and thanked me. He said that he could finally hit the road and do his assigned duty now that I was handling this area of the job. It was an eye-opener and a motivation for me. I could see the struggle that our police department was going through at these difficult times.

“On the second day, there was a huge crowd as usual, which was completely challenging for me to manage and there were instances where I shouted out for which I felt bad later. There was a man standing in a line there, who started asking about the salary we get for this volunteering. Though I explained to him about volunteering, he was convinced only when I showed photos of TQI activities from my mobile.

Then there was an announcement from the government to give ration supplies directly to the people’s homes and it added more difficulties to the work and in addition to that, my family was not okay with me going in person to all the homes as it would make me vulnerable to the virus. But, I convinced them.

In another Village, people from abroad had come without giving any prior information to the government and one among them was tested positive, which eventually increased the spread of the virus in that village. People started protesting that they can't stay in the village anymore and to manage those issues, volunteers were assigned to that village, and I was one of them.

Meanwhile, people coming in from foreign countries to that area increased and they asked us to check every house in person and make sure that all the medical procedures were completed without fault. Then, we were appointed in a red alert zone, where we took tablets twice a day as a precaution and I had skin allergies because of the hand gloves.

Around the same time, we planned for an event called Friend – o – Meter for TQI. I got sick, was asked to stay home for three days, and I used that time to plan for that event.

When the spread of the virus started from the Koyambedu cluster, the cases started increasing in our area too. At that time, a single house was assigned to one volunteer. We were given many contact numbers of people affected by COVID to check their health status through call as well as in person. I was later assigned to 3 villages, where we issued masks to all the people but the problem was that they would not accept masks from us since they were afraid of getting in contact with the virus through us. It was sad to realize the low range of information they had about the virus. We, hence, had to make them aware of the pandemic. It was indeed very challenging.

Around my 140th day of COVID Volunteering, I felt left out from my family. I stayed with my father for a week and then returned back to volunteering. I volunteered for a total of 148 days and learned a lot from people. It was a very eye-opening experience.”

Ashotharma is also a part of TQI'S Phone mentoring, which he describes as the best experience as it is giving him a platform to learn new things.



NIRMAL SHANKAR

Associate Director, Film Industry

A small interview with Mr. Nirmal Shankar

Mr. Madhusudhan, Co-Founder of TQI Introduced Mr. Nirmal, a member of TQI for 3 years, who is consistently participating in all the TQI events and the core team member of TQI.

Madhu asked about Nirmal's entry and responsibility in TQI.

He said, i am an IT Employee in Chennai. I was a naughty kid during the school days. No one was there to teach me the right things. In 12th grade , at a certain point , i realized my mistakes. Then I joined my higher studies , on that time , though i didn't have any idea to correct the mistakes of others, i wanted to do something. At that point, my roommate said that he was going to the government schools to teach those children ,then I came to know about TQI. I thought i could use this opportunity to make those children realize that there is a bigger world outside because those children used to live in a smaller circle. TQI provided me the platform to do that. Initially I was the member of Salem district. I'm from Namakkal district. In Success meet of TQI in Chennai they give an opportunity to initiate the events in my own district. So, I created a team in Namakkal District and i became a Mentor for that team and we started doing our best and now our juniors were doing better than us, and this is how our journey started.

Then Mr. Madhusudhan asked about the impact TQI made in his corporate life.

He said, everybody knows that there will be a big interview process where they will check all our skills and attitudes. In the interview, the key skill I mentioned was my membership in TQI, I told the panel about my journey in TQI from a member to a mentor. At that point, they came to know about my Leadership skills, as I handled more than 40 school kids. After 6 months in the office, they promoted me as an assistant team leader, when I asked about the reason for promoting a fresher as an Assistant team leader, they mentioned about my role in TQI as a mentor of a whole district. Wherever I go, after introducing myself, I would mention my presence in TQI because I always feel proud to be a part of TQI.

Mr. Madhusudhan asked about the most memorable moment in TQI.

He said, what we consider as success would be our memorable moment. We are all leaders here and leaders should make leaders and it's my wish too. When I was teaching in grade 10, a boy came and dropped a letter in my hand. To my surprise, he wrote that I am his role model. I believe, to consider someone as our role model, we should not look at their position, instead, we should look at their journey. That boy said that he was inspired when I shared my story and that was my best TQI moment. This motivated me to put more effort into my works. Mr. Madhusudhan said that Mr. Nirmal's story best sums up that naughty kids don't turn up into naughty adults rather, turn into role models who impacts other people's lives.



JEEVITHRA

Microbiologist

Jeevithra from Dharmapuri sharing her story as part of TQI – the roads she took, people she met, and the memories of her leaving a mark in the lives of many. She is currently a member of the core committee and is also mentoring college students.

Every girl becomes a queen when she comes out of her boundary and starts planting the seeds of knowledge and Jeevithra is the one who came up to enlighten the young minds of Dharmapuri. She came to know about TQI through one of her seniors in the social club of her college. She began her journey as a volunteer in the year 2013. This journey spruced up a new soul into her by escalating the patience, initiative, and authority level. “The purpose of life is to live it, taste the experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for a newer and richer experience”. As emphasized by the quote, Ms. Jeevithra gathered a lot of experiences throughout the journey. Moments to be cherished!

Later, she took responsibility as the district representative for Dharmapuri. “I don’t have to look far to find treasures, I discover them every time I visit a library,” said Michael Embry. In 2016, during DAAN UTSAV, her team renovated the library located near the Dharmapuri government school, which became the backbone for the students. Because of her engrossment in all such works, she led the team effectively.

As the saying goes, “if you have the passion in your heart, you can reach great heights”, Jeevithra reached the position of Project manager for RECONNECT 2018. She initiated the program where TQI reconnected with all the volunteers who had once been a member along with the then-existing volunteers.

The project was a huge success and acted as a milestone in her career. In the following year, she again took responsibility as the project manager for DAAN UTSAV 2019.

Everyone has a role model in our life but it is very special to be the role model in others’ life and Jeevithra became the role model for many students. In spite of being busy with her family life in the recent past, she is extending great support to the TQI family throughout and we thank her for her continuous efforts. Her journey from the bottom strata to being an irreplaceable gem in the family proves the power of determination and sincerity in our lives. She is now earning bliss by sharing her wisdom with young students.





MADHUBALA

Software Engineer, Currently in Dubai

**A small interview with Ms. Madhubala,
Moderated by Mr. Madhusudanan,
Co-founder, TQI**

To begin with, he asked Ms. Madhubala about her experience in TQI. She said, "I'm working in the corporate sector. As I took a break from TQI to concentrate on my work, I joined again after 1 year and decided to volunteer on my weekdays. At that time there was a notification for the interview of DWO, So I decided to walk in. To my surprise, it was a 3-hour interview with Mr.Mohan, Mr.Ram, Mr.Vishwa & Mr.Madhusudhan as Panel members and I was amazed by the questioning skills of Mr.Madhusudhan. As there is a long interview, I lost my hope of getting selected but in the Alumni meet of 2017, they announced the DWOs and I was selected as the DWO of KARUR. I was very happy but fearful at the same time because I know its a big responsibility. So I Promised myself to concentrate, on this apart from my work pressures & to take this as a serious responsibility"

"As I have a very enthusiastic team, they took care of all the summits. Our team managed the summits without any delays. This reduced the need for my presence for the events to happen. I managed the teams through phone calls and get instant reports. I also made a suggestion to the Founders regarding the PG scholarship and they told me that they will implement the idea".

Then Mr. Madhusudhan asked about the impact TQI made in her corporate life. She said,

TQI helped me a lot to improve my skill to work in teams. I could also make friends easily and do the works properly. People around me also believed that I could manage teams easily, though I'm not in any positions like TL. The same happened with our TQI team. We worked with sync, we didn't fight within us in delegating the works. In case of a problem, we faced it together.

Mr. Madhusudhan thanked her for sharing her experiences and added that these words would encourage TQI to strive forward.

Ms. Madhubala is now one of the members of the TQI core team. She has devoted her valuable time to the growth of our family, as well as setting an example to other budding volunteers.





SUDHARSHAN

Senior Engineer, Infosys Ltd Mysore

With the flaming enthusiasm and a spirit of joy, TQI's Karur Volunteer, now a project manager of TQI ULLAS, shared the most precious experiences he had with TQI.

In February 2018, when his College senior called him for handling sessions for government school students, Mr Sudharshan didn't know anything about TQI, but the rest changed his life. As a first session, he went to a school at a remote village called Paramatthi, to handle classes for 9th-grade students.

“The students there had different perspectives and they took us to another world,” he said.

“When my seniors, who took me into TQI, passed out of the college, I represented our district in ULLAS confluence held in 2018, and that is when I came to know about the core values and various other activities of TQI and when I met the teams from different districts in the summit, I was amazed and realised that the things I am doing are just a drop of the ocean”, he said. In the next year, Mr Sudharshan was the mentor of the Karur district, he created a team, and made a clear plan for the events to facilitate out of the box thinking to the government school students. He always used to think about the gap that exists between the students of the government schools and the other schools and wanted to make a change.

“I want to be the change I wish to see in the world and that was made possible by the ULLAS sessions”, he said.

With the team’s persistent efforts, they gained a good name from the principal of the college, who then supported them for all the activities.

“TQI helped me a lot in improving my managerial skills. I learned to manage multiple things with a great balance and also to approach a higher authority, which I never knew before. Moreover, the module for Ullas per se is life-oriented and helped me in many endeavours” he said.

In a diary and a planner given for the students, a student asked for his autograph, which Mr Sudharshan proudly shared, which also reminded him of Mr Ram’s favourite quote, “ Success is when your signature changes into Autograph”.

“When we went to the Paramathi school after 3 months, children there, with all the enthusiasm, reached us and shared their progress after our Ullas sessions. The thing that they remembered us after 3months itself made us overwhelmed and took us to cloud nine”, he said. In his journey Mr Sudharshan planned many events like DAAN UTSAV, One year, one cause, Farmer’s day and a lot more and among them Farmers day celebration, where they worked in the field with the farmers and gave them cards and events conducted in an orphanage for physically disabled children, stays close to his heart.

During the next Confluence, his team got the Best Team award for their well-planned events and on-time submission of reports which encouraged the team further.

“I developed my mail writing skills during this time, which is helping me now in my business. After TQI, life changed a lot. From an average student to the one with good managerial skills, I started balancing everything in my life and learnt to handle things professionally. To be short, TQI shaped the best out of me. Now, from handling one team in Karur to handling 28 teams in ULLAS, I learned a lot from TQI and hoping to give back a lot to TQI”, he said.

Don’t expect a change, be the change, says Mr Sudharshan, as a message to all TQI’ians.



YESHWANTH

Senior Human resource – Talent acquisition

Yeshwanth, a proud TQIian, started as a volunteer in 2016 and now a project manager, shared his experience on how his passion for social work came true. Yeshwanth worked with small projects in TQI during his first year of college. As a person interested in doing business and making short films, he took a year break and again joined TQI in 2017.

When he met Mr. Gokul (Project head, TQI), and expressed his interest in doing more projects in TQI, he was asked to approach Ram Anna and then handled the Daan Utsav project of TQI. After getting appreciation from Ram Anna for the effort he took on the Daan Utsav project, he was asked to apply for Zonal head in TQI, which is meant for final year students. He attended the interview but was not selected for the role. But life is all about miracles and surprises.

A few days later, Yeshwanth got a call from Ram Anna, along with all the top tier members of TQI. He was asked to work as a Project manager in the expansion team!

“As a project manager in TQI, I have to talk with many corporate people. Talking with strangers was something I was afraid of, but this role and TQI changed everything. It gave me the confidence to give a speech in front of 1000+ people in my college. In fact, it is because of that experience in TQI, that I am now able to work efficiently in the corporate field.

“Initially, When I tried to join some organisations for social work, things were so tough. I was never satisfied with the work I did. But in TQI, I’m getting the fullest support and doing my best for society.”

He regrets that he had a year break from TQI. At present, Yeshwanth is also coordinating the TQI Express phone mentoring for college students.

“There is nothing called an ‘end’ or ‘fullest of experience’ in any field, there is always something waiting in the next step” is the lesson from TQI that he had learnt.

“Don’t hesitate to talk/approach people when there is a need, to accomplish something. You should seek help whenever it’s essential. There is nothing to be ashamed of. It is the moment when I blew my hesitations and spoke to Ram Anna, that changed my life for the better.”





ANUSUYA KARUPPAIYA

Software developer at Sprintzeal Private Limited

Anusuya, who has been working in the Namakkal team since her college days, shared her journey which started when she got to know about TQI from her college senior. As a person who is interested in teaching, Anusuya began her journey in the Salem team with a dream to form a team of girls.

Anusuya's thoughts of gender empowerment manifested into a girls team of volunteers in Namakkal, which she is holding close to her heart. 'I always wanted to create opportunities for women to come out and do something, but I was clueless and TQI gave me the biggest opportunity to make things I dreamt of into reality', says Anusuya.

When She opted for the Namakkal team, she formed a team of the girls and started working. As a person from a government school, she wanted to be an inspiration for the students in government schools and she became one, when she started handling sessions in the schools.

After forming the team, she struggled a lot to get a school to conduct sessions. She approached more than 4 schools to get permission. But when they got the permission, it's time to prove themselves! Kids are so active and naughty in the classroom.

Teachers wanted to stand with us when we are handling the sessions, to control the students and are always doubtful of us but we convinced them to leave for a while and created an environment where all of them could listen.

When teachers got the feedbacks about us from the kids, they called us again, asked us to come again for the session and that's really a proud moment for our team. Getting feedback from the school students after the session is always special.

When I talked about being fearless and the importance of coming up to talk before the crowd, a kid from that class wrote that I'm her inspiration. Those are the moments to cherish', says Anusuya. She was the KANAA project manager in 2020 and also a part of the Module preparation team for phone mentoring. She said, 'KANAA project made me realize my strengths'.

TQI is a turning point in Anusuya's life. "From project management to communication skills, TQI shaped me into a different person and all that I learnt in TQI, I'm executing it in my career", says Anusuya.

She said, 'When we are very determined to do something, nothing can stop us. With strong efforts and hard work, success will be the only result'.



ARAVINTH SUBRAMANIAM

Software Engineer, Mphasis & Chess Champion

Aravinth, one of TQI's core members who has remained with the organisation since its beginning, has shared a lot about his journey with TQI and everything he has learned along the way. He starts, "The journey began in 2011 when I first met Ram. When Ram, Madhu, Vel, Kamal, myself, and a few others decided to conduct an express mentoring programme, That was the place where the base of phone mentoring and a few other events were discussed. I was associated with few of my juniors to organize some communication classes", and continues to cheerfully share them all. "I initiated the first ever TQI event in 2014, which was a chess tournament held at a government school in a small village".

"When TQI first started, there were only 10 – 12 of us, all SRMites; We intended to meet once a week to brainstorm ideas, which I believe has resulted in a solid foundation. We started to go with ideologies which were not present in our academic path. It gives me a very good feeling that what we started has grown into something so large that it cannot be expressed in words".

Reminiscing about the roles he played, he adds, "I was working as a core team member by which I put forth ideas on the forum; be it the idea of confluence or any other events. I'd monitor the students and share my views on their work. I was more like a common reviewer in the cricket", he laughs. "Apart from that, whenever TQI came up with crowd funding for social cause, I used to take care of it".

He recalls his favorite memories , "I loved the TQI Tech Park meetings where the juniors voluntarily come up to organize it. We conducted the traffic awareness programme in Oorappakkam, which is one of my favorite event. Apart from that, our first ever corporate event, 'The Wipro Marathon' is also a memorable one".

"It was in 2017 TQI confluence, Mr. Arun Jain, the CEO of the Intellect was invited as the chief guest. When he arrived, Mohan Anna introduced me to him also made me sit next to him. I was so nervous. He suddenly shook my hand and appreciated me. I was so grateful to have the opportunity to share some ideas with him" That was one proud moment for him.

Life before and after TQI: "I wasn't so good at making conversations with people. I'd think twice before talking, be it in person or in a common forum. On so many instances, I've remained silent, undermining myself. TQI then provided me with a forum in which I had to interact with various people. Ram was one such person to encourage me in all endeavors. Now, I can talk to anyone about anything without any hesitation. TQI also taught me to value both success and failure equally"

The message he gives is, "As a volunteer, one should not expect anything in return and that's all it takes. It should be done for achieving self-satisfaction. Practice non-judgmental listening in every aspect of your life and I'd love everyone to add a bit of love to the work they do to see miracles happen".



MAILESH.B

Associate Systems Engineer, IBM

Mailesh, a volunteer from SRM Valliamai shared his story of becoming a zonal head in TQI and describes TQI as a space of diverse cultures integrated together. Mailesh came to know about TQI during his second year of college through his friends. “An eagerness to do good to society drove me into TQI”, says Mailesh.

“In 2016, I joined as a volunteer. Within a month, I was handed the opportunity to become the district representative of Karur. It was an excellent team with great enthusiastic volunteers. It was a challenge to manage a team from a long distance. In the process, I learned so many things like mail communication, project management skills, excel sheets, word documents with the help of Mr. Sudarshan. Then, I became the zonal head of the central zone and with the cooperation of the Karur and Trichy team, we become more functional as a unit and showcased our integrity.

Later that year in the ULLAS confluence, our team won ‘The best district team award’. We were so proud of it and I cherished it personally”, says Mailesh.

Mailesh’s team earned the management support in Arul Murugan college, Karur and conducted the zonal meet where he got the opportunity to felicitate the principal of Arul Murugan college. “It was a great moment in my life, I felt like my signature turned into an autograph”, says Mailesh.

His team conducted many events. They met farmers, orphanages and spent time with them discussing the challenges in their life, which Mailesh describes as the best moments in TQI.

“From being an introvert to handling a new diverse group of people and uniting them as a team, TQI taught me to embrace myself and turn things as my positive attribute. From handling insecurities in the workplace to take an initiative in a lead role, TQI shaped me into better version of myself”, says Mailesh.





OVIYA RAMESH

Fashion Management

“TQI changed my life, it transformed me into a fuller version of myself and rewired my thinking process to include socially responsible decisions”, says 21 year old Oviya Ramesh with sheer passion and enthusiasm in her voice.

Oviya, currently pursuing her masters in Fashion Management at NIFT, connected with TQI when she was doing her under-graduation from Sona College of fashion technology (Salem). During her 1st year under-graduation she came to know about TQI from her department senior Tanush Pandiyan. What started as just a trying out experience changed her life completely for the better.

It was during the teaching event at Mallur school with the Ayodhyapatnam team (her first ever experience) at TQI , she saw the real joy of volunteering through the eyes of small children which then led her to take up more projects at TQI. She became the District Mentor for Ayodhyapatnam and a team was formed under her lead.

“Our first ever event was the biggest that has happened in our college and I am so proud that we could distribute 380 tree saplings for the teachers day with just a team of 15 members. The response from the teachers and students was overwhelmingly encouraging. They did not expect such a huge event and it touched a lot of hearts. In fact it is from that day, our college started recognizing and supporting TQI in all ways possible. That is our success and that is TQI’s success. To make an impact not only on an individual level but in a whole institution as well” , says Oviya.

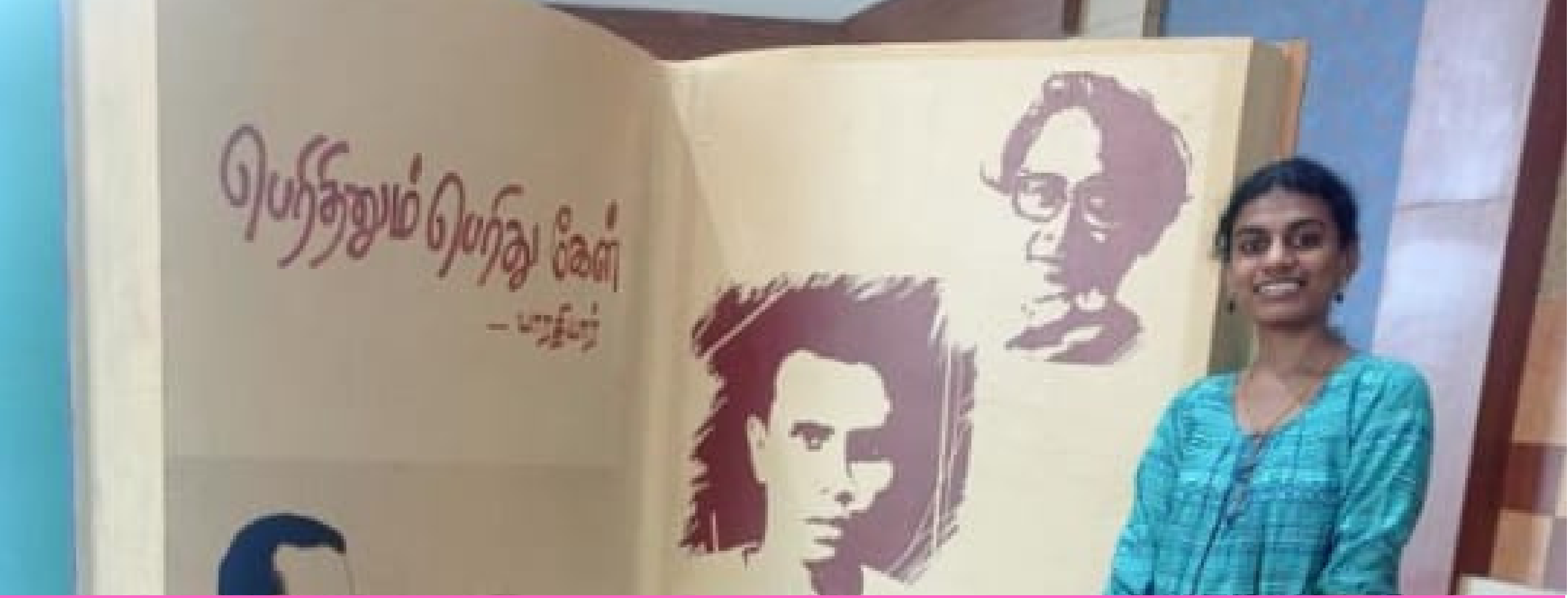
In the Daan utsav celebrations, her team conducted cultural competitions in the orphanages in and around Salem. Oviya organised the event and distributed TQI certificates and prizes to the winners and she describes this as a lifetime memory. As Oviya was in Andaman during the event, she made a contribution by making thank you cards and distributed it to the local securities there.

“It is this thanksgiving quality that I have learnt from TQI which defines me now that “ I am no more a part of TQI , TQI is a part of who I am”, says Oviya.

Oviya still wishes to widen the canopy of TQI wherever she goes from taking steps to create a separate club in her college, to printing out and issuing thank you cards to random social workers, traffic polices, PHCs, guards, maids and anyone whom we forgets to stay thankful for. She was also the first person to take up TQI Home gardening 2021.

“I didn’t know I had the potential to volunteer or lead a team until I started working with TQI, which brought out my inherent skills and leadership qualities to the point that when someone asks me what I have done so far in life, I can happily say that ‘I volunteered, I still do, I have found my passion and my happiness lies with it’ . I also networked with a lot of people, learnt a lot of new skills, experienced deadlines and duties to a great extent that If today I turn back and see all I could see is TQI and the happy memories attached to it “

“There are many people who have supported and helped me throughout this journey. Naren who took care of finances in our team, Gokul Anna under whom I have learnt how to be a human with a lot of patience and of course Ram Anna who is the embodiment of encouragement. If I should say one thing to new volunteers who have just joined TQI, “Despite being in college or any institution that gives you an holistic education, TQI will show you real world experiences, it shapes you into the fuller version of yourself and the qualities of TQI will become your way of life, it makes you influence people in touching ways that you could never imagine”.



VAISHNAVI

Book Writer, Pursuing Post Graduation

Vaishnavi, the lead of team Zhagaram and a Tamil literature enthusiast, shares her journey with Talent Quest for India. Vaishnavi was doing her B.Tech Genetic Engineering at SRM University when she first joined TQI. She says she was introduced to TQI by a friend in the year 2019. Though she was not much active in the initial days, soon she started to explore the various projects of TQI. In the Talent hunt's Tamil story writing competition she has secured third place and was one of the jury members for the Tamil poem writing competition.

Vaishnavi's interest towards Tamil began right from her childhood and she accolades her dad and her Tamil teacher for motivating her. Vaishnavi started writing poems when she was 15 with the pen name Venba. To engage the public, she used Instagram where she posted every other poem of hers.

Later when a proposal for starting a Tamil club was made, Vaishnavi started to work on it. The team Zhagaram started with just 5 volunteers and now has grown magnificently with over 100+ volunteers working on 4 different projects of Zhagaram. Her team has been publishing monthly Tamil magazines from August 2020 to August 2021. "Now we have planned to publish the magazines once in three months", says Vaishnavi. These magazines focus on poems, short stories, and novels. Vaishnavi says that there are many budding writers, even from Sri Lanka, consistently writing for the magazine.

The team writes short stories that convey the literary meaning of Thirukkural from class 6 and class 7 syllabuses. Vaishnavi confirms that these stories are soon to be published as a paperback so as to help the students for easy understanding.

She says she never thought of writing short stories, but it eventually happened, and the members of Zhagaram are the best critics of her work. Interestingly, Vaishnavi has written 12 short stories among which some of them have won prizes. Inspiring many members of Zhagaram, Vaishnavi also published her very first novel “Avaloru Pattamboochi” as paperback. Not just limited to these activities, Vaishnavi has also stepped into the field of content writing and translation. She is also focusing on enhancing the Tamil reading and writing skills of children through her Tamil classes.

Vaishnavi used to be an introvert before joining TQI. But soon things changed as she started to lead the team Zhagaram. She connects many people, especially the youth, who showcase a common interest in Tamil literature. Vaishnavi says, “I never imagined that I could lead a team but TQI has made it true”. She also adds that her leadership skills have improved a lot.

“So far I had a beautiful journey with TQI. TQI has made the introvert me open up and lead a team like Zhagaram”, says Vaishnavi. She feels extremely happy contributing to the literary community through TQI. She says she has gained lots of strength, acquired lots of skills, and learned a lot of things. Vaishnavi says, “TQI is always close to my heart. It is giving the young minds the opportunity to explore their strength”. She praises TQI as the only reason for what she is today.

Finally, Vaishnavi thanked Deva Dharshini for introducing her to TQI. She also thanks Mr. Ramasubramaniam and Mr. Gokul for giving her the freedom to explore and develop herself both personally and professionally.



PADMAVATHI T.R

Program Analyst, CTS

Padmavathi, from Namakkal has been representing the Salem district from initial days of her journey with TQI. It started in 2015, when Praveen Kumar, one of her seniors in college let her know about TQI. It was the expansion stage of TQI to many districts of Tamil Nadu.

During the college days, with immense confidence, she approached her management and formed a concrete crew. Her college provided all sorts of support for their events. Her team proved to be a great asset to the college as well as TQI.

Their projects include Daan Utsav, One year One cause and Calendar events like Teachers Day. Her team has worked on the theme of “SAVE WATER” by teaching water management on a day to day basis. Her team gratefully celebrated Daan Utsav with Police officers, firemen and other social workers. Concerning street social workers, her team provided them with pairs of gloves and other essential items (Pre-covid times) for maintenance of the Streets.

“It was a nice experience visiting different schools for the events and getting permission. TQI focuses more on government schools than private schools and approaching a government school is not an easy task compared to private schools, it needs a lot of courage to make things happen. TQI provides training and placement opportunities to students which are helping a lot of students. It requires immense dedication and time to prepare and execute them”, says Padmavathi.



THIRUMALAI

Senior Sales support coordinator, Hewlett Packard

Thirumalai is been a part of TQI since 2017 and now is a core team member. "Right from the day of my interview TQI has always treated me like family," says Thirumalai.

He remembered and cherished his first experience with TQI "My first engagement with TQI was with summit classes. We were sent to teach class 11 students. I still remember that moment my friend handed me the session in the middle of class, and I was unsure what to say and struggled for a long time. Students began to tease me, and it was a day I would never forget. I then began improving my confidence in my public speaking abilities. I took the final class on the topic of advertising at the end of the year with self-assurance and confidence."

Thirumanlai kept insisting on how confident he has become and how TQI helped him to be who he is today as a person, "The sole reason I've stayed with TQI for so long is because of the confidence and trust that the TQI family has in me."

"TQI is the main motivation I can now connect and interact with others without hesitation. Thus the amount of encouragement and the fact that I am prioritized in TQI motivates me to keep going."

Thirumalai had a beautiful answer when asked 'what was his takeaway from TQI', He said, "The greatest takeaway from my experience has been how to interact with people with confidence and I can't say enough about how this quality has contributed to my overall development as an individual."

He expressed how TQI has been there with him in his professional milestone, "In fact, I was hired by HP exclusively because of this confidence I acquired from my TQI experience." And he also believes TQI will continue to be as significant.

He adds His favorite memory from his journey in TQI is the day he met Ram Anna and also the confluences of the year "because that was the only day we could meet so many people and share so many memories with them."

A little-big thing Thirumalai has to share as a one-liner about TQI was "TQI is all about new experiences and incredible adventures"





MOHAN KUMAR

Engineering Trainee, Movate

"I had to write a report for the meeting as my first task in TQI. Even though I had no idea how to write a report, I volunteered to do the work. After the meeting, I approached my seniors and asked for assistance; they then showed me how to prepare a report." Although this was a humble beginning that's where the spark to be a part of TQI began for Mohan.

Mohan always likes to keep himself engaged, So when he graduated from college, he immediately started looking for a job. At that time, he wasn't very involved in TQI. A few days after starting on the bench, he redirected his free time to TQI which eventually motivated him to start a team in his district that became his dream. start TQI in my own district.

"TQI has changed how I conduct myself professionally. I've only had the chance to discover myself thanks to TQI."

"My biggest takeaway from TQI has been the importance of planning and execution. I had the ability to impart planning knowledge to students in the 12th grade. One student, in particular, followed the strategy after it was explained to them and was able to perform better on the test. I will always treasure the recollection of hearing this from him."

"My confidence to launch the technical service-based domain "We Are Engineers" was only given to me by TQI." That was a huge step that added so much value to his life. TQI is constantly a platform for you and for many other students to change their lives. So seize the chance and take use of other possibilities to learn.





NAVEEN

Product Planning & Control Engineer, Injecto Plast PVT LTD

Naveen joined TQI in 2019 through his friends Shyam and Sandhiya, and later became a SPOOC in the year 2020. "My seniors were unable to attend summit class due to unavoidable circumstances, therefore I was given the opportunity to do so. This is my first assignment for TQI".

"The first is my own self-interest in developing my knowledge and skills. The distinctive trait that TQI possesses is that there won't be any bias among volunteers. There are no age restrictions or other restrictions in place in TQI. You can come forward and begin participating whenever you like.

TQI gave me more than I contributed to it, thus I learnt a lot from being a part. My best memory from my undergraduate years is summit classes, and reading the group's reaction from the kids will always hold a special place. and the time spent traveling between classes.

My professional career has benefited greatly from the team management and communication abilities that I learned via TQI. I wasn't a good communicator before I joined TQI, but I can already see myself becoming one after that. The ability to handle people and plan events are the three main areas in which I can distinguish myself between before and after joining TQI. Use it carefully to learn new things, form nice relationships with others, and offer advice while organizing an event".



KEERTHANA

Software developer at Seimens

Keerthana, attended MAM College in Trichy. She currently works as a developer for Seimpons and is involved with the AGARAM Foundation.

"I found TQI through my friend Manoj since I'm the type of person who constantly wants to join social clubs and is interested in participating in social events." this expresses her interest to be a part of social works at all points.

She emphasized how important and hard the process of getting permission from schools and completing a session is a lot of learning "My first class is ULLAS, and after a protracted wait, we finally received permission from the school, it was worth the wait."

She expresses why she liked the way TQI worked - "It never feels like an office job or anything compulsion to perform the work; it is entirely voluntary and it's up to us on deciding what is our role in the good deed". It motivates me to continue working with TQI at all points."

"I've learned a lot at TQI personally. I used to have stage fright, but I soon enhanced my life to overcome it. Event management and planning abilities subsequently prove to be a valuable life lesson." Keerthana adds more reasons why values TQI more and see the team as family.

She shares their TQI team's fun post-teaching session, "The minutes of the meeting will be discussed after each session to go over the important events that took place. This is usually enjoyable and leaves one feeling satisfied."

Keerthana ends by sharing how a volunteer should treat their responsibility - "Use it wisely and approach everything clear mindset and never forget to have fun as well. So enjoy yourself as well as your responsibility."





MADHU R

Asst. System Engineer, TCS

Madhu is from Bangalore, graduated from Paavai College of Engineering, and is currently employed at TCS.

"I'm the type of person who enjoys speaking but also hesitates a lot. When I was looking for help for my presentation for the next day, I got my senior Munish to help me, and he introduced me to the TQI circle, and after learning about this trust, I became interested in joining it."

Although Madhu couldn't recall the precise first event experience, but he recalled the teachers' day celebration, when they all worked as a team, there were seniors and juniors, and everyone worked as a team while having fun. "It is always the learnings and fun we get from the works that we do that stays as memory," says, Madhu.

Madhu continued his emphasis on teamwork in TQI and how it motivated him to continue with TQI, "I continue to be inspired by the juniors' level of commitment and their creative ideas. And that was the good reason for continuing since it gives me the impression that they can do a lot in the right direction, and I want to impart my knowledge to them."

He couldn't really stop listing his learnings from working as a team and from TQI in general, "Many lessons can be drawn from the TQI, including those relating to patience, teamwork, leadership qualities, team management, event planning, and more."

Madhu enjoyed sharing about their auto ride to the schools as a team, "Since the auto will always be busy and some people won't have a place to sit, they will stand or footboard in the car while the others make fun of them, the trip to school by auto from Namakkal will always be entertaining."

"I gained the courage to confront challenges and my interview because of TQI. TQI is the only thing that keeps me active during difficult times; else, I would have stood out as the laziest person among all."

Madhu ends with saying a strong message to the new volunteers, "Do not act in a way to complete it or for the sake of name recognition; it is a 200% volunteer initiative. If you put your all into it, it will yield many more benefits that you may take away with you."





ESSAKIAMMAL

Process industrializator in Michelin India tyres

Essai, a chemical engineering graduate from SRM institute got the opportunity to connect with TQI through her college seniors. Essai is someone who is really passionate when it comes to the role of one's contribution to society. She recently shared how amazing her experience has been with the TQI community.

The foremost event she took part in was DAAN UTSAV. For this particular event, she and her team had come up with a plan of celebrating the 'joy of giving' with the twinkling little kids in a nearby orphanage. But unfortunately, her team couldn't make it to the event and out of the blue she came out with an incredible idea of calling upon her street friends and small kids to join the event. For some special reason, that night ended up making her feel entitled as the "most happiest person".

Following this, she also shares another incident where she along with her team went to an orphanage home in Chennai. They were supposed to carry some boxes and cross the busy road.

Out of their expectation, there came a few youngsters to help them carry those boxes while they were about to cross the road. When they inquired they got to know that those lovely bunch of people also belonged to another NGO.

She still chooses to continue with the TQI community because of the TRUST and FREEDOM that her team has in her.

She says, " Reaching out to people confidently is one of the greatest take away from the TQI and each opportunity over here has given her in-depth learning from all dimensions". She also shares that the confidence to face the crowd without any hesitations has come from nowhere but from TQI.

She wrapped it up beautifully by sharing a few lines which say, " Always seek ways to explore yourself. You are here because you are assigned to do some good things for our nation, and let's give our best".





SANDHIYA

Engineering Architecture ,Renault Nissan

Sandhiya, a Mechanical graduate currently working in Renault Nissan. She has completed her schooling in Government school which gave her a personal connect with the life of students. She had a great desire to serve school children and her dream was fulfilled by TQI.

When we asked about how did her TQI journey started ,she confessed that,"The journey of TQI started because of my senior Harini,who shared my contact to the team.After a week I got an interview call .

When enquired about her first event she rejoiced by sharing her experience ,"My first experience in TQI was going to summit class. When we went to the school we weren't allowed to take class, which really made us very sad.After explaining our hardship to Head master he gave us an hour at last to take. After struggling a lot we were able to take class that day. At last to see the face of children made our day".

Sandhiya instills to continue in TQI even after her studies as she believes TQI is the platform where she finds her peace in the frustrated schedule. She always doubted her communication skills and only because of TQI today she feels very confident to face crowd.

When asked to share about her beautiful memories in TQI she said, "Women's day event was the most memorable event. We all got chance to see and speak with all women's out there in our society. We listened their struggles and hardship to attain their position, which always inspired me to reach great heights".

TQI gave me introduction to lot of people around the district . Whenever I just want to know about something or want to visit places I could easily ask for suggestion from my contacts.

Her ending note which was so heartwarming and selfless, "Don't expect anything personally. We are here to give back to universe what we have".





VENKAT

Planning & QS Engineer, RR Engineering Company

Venkat, is from Thirunelveli and he spent six years working as a TQI member. In the beginning, I did phone mentoring. Currently, I'm doing ULLAS programs and he felt happy and proud to share he was a part of the core team now.

Venkat shares how TQI attracted him, He says, "When I first had the desire to help school students, TQI came to my attention after which I started gathering information about TQI, I reached a point where I was so sure about being a part of it and I joined this team with dreams."

It was a very valuable takeaway that Venkat had after every teaching session which he expressed beautifully when he said, "In Ulla's class, I first started instructing. I always feel good when I think about it. I can no longer be a student because I finished high school and entered college, but TQI allows me to bring out the curious student in me who is inspired by the positive school environment."

As he cherished the school children and school environment that he gets to experience during every TQI Ullas session he also shared how influential these sessions were to build and be rooted in his principle - "share my knowledge with others, especially with students and to help them grow."

When asked about his favorite memory with TQI she started with "TQI as a whole is a valuable life experience" and continued saying, "One incident that I'd like to share is that once, while I was waiting for a bus, a girl came up to me and said, "I attended your lesson today. Before your session, I was really down and gradually I started feeling great about myself, so I groomed myself into a more confident female. I would always treasure this moment"

In both his personal and professional life, he shared the TQI role "A volunteer's unpromised TQI development includes the value of self and enhanced abilities to communicate, and I'm no exception. In actuality, it helped my career a lot more."

In conclusion, he adds, "Being a volunteer in TQI, One must try and imbibe the core values of TQI for a meaningful journey."





GIRIJA

IT analyst, TCS – Currently in Japan

Girija from Theni district, got the opportunity to meet Ram anna and Mohan anna in her college, which made her join TQI. Her first event in TQI was an awareness program regarding food wastage.

Throughout her journey of volunteering, Girija learned to appreciate people even for small actions and improved her social skills.

“After 4 years I went to the class where my journey began. I thought those kids would have forgotten me but they remembered and rejoiced after seeing my face was a memorable feeling”, says Girija.

She adds, “TQI was one of the reasons that I could crack the TCS interview. Only because of TQI, I have such a loving family.”

“Appreciate everybody around you and never be hesitant to share your thoughts and ideas”, were her final thoughts.



SANGEETHA

Backend Developer ,Cal4care Group

Sangeetha from Trichy has been contributing to TQI from her college days and currently she is working in Cal4care Group, Coimbatore.

She embarked her steps in TQI because of her seniors Suresh Kumar and Keerthana. The way she tackled her interview gave her the chance to enter TQI.

“My first event was Daan Utsav ,we got a chance to take career guidance and awareness about planting trees and farming .That day I felt I am in the right path as I had wholesome satisfaction that I am able to contribute to society”, says Sangeetha.

She is still continuing her journey in TQI today is only because of Gokul anna ,he is her only inspiration as he continues to contribute to TQI even after his studies, which motivates her to strive harder to serve the society.

Sangeetha says,” Listening and leadership quality is the prime factor that she gained from TQI”.

She rewound us with a memorable experience from her journey , recently she got a chance to mentor a Government school student Ms.Dhiviya .The whole mentoring session was the most remarkable days of her journey , she also adds on

by saying that Ram anna has great trust so that she could confidently take up new project with lots of courage.

Sangeetha says she feels satisfied only because of TQI.

"Even if you do a small part of work do with great level of dedication .It is never a thing that you have to indulge in every event or every project.Take up a single project and give your best dears",were her final thoughts





SIVALAKSHMI

Computer trainer, AM Tech Solutions

Sivalakshmi, started her TQI journey in 2018 with the Trichy team. Started as a volunteer, she is now the zonal head for the Central zone. It has been a self learning phase for her, as she mentions, 'TQI, beyond volunteering, is more about the growth of volunteers themselves'.

When Sivalakshmi started in 2018, the team was enthusiastic to conduct social awareness events. With about 20 members, she was active in events like One year one cause of 2018 'Farming', calendar events, Daan Utsav celebrations etc. As a zonal head now she is managing 4 teams. "This year, the programs are more centered around schools like cluster programs, Ullas classes etc., we are trying to organically expand the activities and the team", says Sivalakshmi.

While hard work goes into all the events, getting permission from school management for conducting classes was most difficult for her. She says. "To communicate well and put forward our demands, we need good communication and negotiation skills, but it is relatively easy now. The schools are inviting us now, it is because of the quality of our past work and the impact it created"

Among the events, One year one cause of 'Farming' is more close to her heart. "For the program we went to my village, met the farmers, interacted with them and made them aware of the things like availing loans, the experience was very fulfilling", says Sivalakshmi.

Sivalakshmi also feels proud about the impact her actions as a volunteer creates. For instance, her Ullas class mentee, Rajeshwari, a student who was hesitant in her communication skills in the beginning, came up with fluent communication at the end of classes. She also happily recalled the moment when her college faculty mentioned her name in a conference for her work as a mentor.

For Sivalakshmi, joining TQI also had an influence in her studies. She says "We could get permission from college management for conducting events only if we get good marks, so I started giving my best to get good grades only to ensure that we get the permission, TQI also made me come out of my comfort zone and helped explore my real potential. Not only academics, I got into my present career of managing my own computer center and also have connections with skills I learnt during my volunteering journey. We used to do a lot of documentation work in TQI, for which I learnt MS office. It also taught me professional communication", She adds. During the Phone mentoring sessions, Sivalakshmi was mentored by Ms.Suganya on communication skills, which was helping her in her career now.

"From coordinating and leading the team to better communication skills, TQI shaped me into a better person. In my view, the essence of volunteering may seem to create an impact on others, but its impact on the volunteer is more than that"



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